

TO: Indiana School Superintendents
FROM: Adriana Melnyk, World Language Specialist
DATE: February 15, 2008
RE: Visiting Teachers from Spain Program

We are pleased to inform you of an opportunity to offer Spanish language instruction through the Visiting Teacher from Spain Program. This program, a joint venture between the Indiana Department of Education and the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, enables local school districts to hire a highly-qualified native Spanish speaker.

Through this program, school districts are able to recruit world language and bilingual education teachers from Spain to teach at elementary, middle and high school levels. At the same time it provides students, parents and educators with the opportunity to work with professionals who are native speakers of the target language, bringing an authentic and valuable international perspective to Indiana classrooms. As an added benefit, these teachers may teach either Spanish language and culture or other subject areas in Spanish, in programs such as immersion or content-based language learning programs. With the growing enrollment numbers in Spanish classes, this is an opportunity to address the immediate need to place highly qualified Spanish teachers in schools where positions may be hard to fill.

Teachers from Spain are interviewed by a representative from the Indiana Department of Education prior to placement in Indiana schools. These teachers are considered both highly qualified and licensed to teach in Indiana schools, and arrive in Indiana with appropriate documentation of background evaluation.

The visiting teachers make a one to three year commitment to teach in the United States, provided that the school district agrees to rehire them. Participating districts employ these teachers in accordance with local hiring policies, and pay them according to their experience and certification level. The Indiana Department of Education sponsors J-1 exchange visitor visas for these teachers, allowing them to work legally in Indiana.

The visiting teachers are responsible for their own housing arrangements, round-trip expenses between Spain and Indiana, and their immediate expenses until they receive their first pay from the district. However, schools must assist visiting teachers by securing a temporary host/welcome family and transportation for the initial days following the teacher's arrival in the United States.

Please disseminate this information to the school principals, the district's director of human resources, and the district's department chair for world languages. If you are unfamiliar with Indiana's Visiting Teachers' Program, or if your school district is interested in participating in this program, please contact Adriana Melnyk, World Language Specialist, by phone at 317.232.9148 or by e-mail at amelnyk@doe.in.gov by April 1, 2007.